

# REIMAGINING PUBLIC DIPLOMACY'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE



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# **REIMAGINING PUBLIC DIPLOMACY'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

**U.S. ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY | MAY 12, 2016**

## **Commission Members:**

**Sim Farar, Chair**

**William J. Hybl, Vice Chair**

**Lyndon L. Olson, Jr., Vice Chair**

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**Katherine Brown, Executive Director**

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## TRANSMITTAL LETTER

To the President, Congress, Secretary of State and the American People:

The U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD), authorized pursuant to Public Law 114-113, hereby submits this white paper, “Reimagining Public Diplomacy’s Organizational Structure at the U.S. Department of State.”

ACPD is a bipartisan panel created by Congress in 1948 to formulate and recommend policies and programs to carry out the public diplomacy functions vested in U.S. government entities and to appraise the effectiveness of those activities. It was reauthorized in January 2013 to complete the Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting, and to produce other reports that support effective public diplomacy activities.

This white paper was completed with the extensive cooperation of more than 100 stakeholders in and outside of the State Department and Congress who participated in interviews, focus group discussions and data collection. The stakeholders include, but are not limited to, Public Diplomacy (PD) professionals in the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs’ front office (R) and those leaders in R’s Policy, Planning and Resources Office (R/PPR), the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP), Bureau of Public Affairs (PA) and Global Engagement Center (GEC), in addition to leadership in the seven regional bureaus: Africa (AF), East Asia Pacific (EAP), Europe and Eurasia (EUR), International Organizations (IO), Near East Asia (NEA), South and Central Asia (SCA), and Western Hemisphere (WHA). We greatly admire the tenacity and talent of our public diplomacy professionals, which was very evident during the six month process of completing this paper. It is our hope that this paper contributes to the conversation on structural reform on public diplomacy at the State Department. It concludes with five core recommendations for how we believe the PD enterprise can become more strategically oriented and efficient in advancing global, regional and bilateral policies and better support PD professionals in Washington and on the frontlines.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sim Farar, Chair  
(California)



William J. Hybl, Vice Chair  
(Colorado)



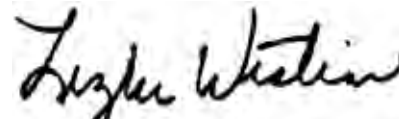
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## RECOMMENDATIONS

Public diplomacy is essential to many of our current foreign policy goals and it is critical that PD professionals be part of the decision-making and strategic planning process, in addition to briefings to Congress on various issues. It is our intent that this paper help start a conversation on potential structural reforms within the public diplomacy apparatus, as nearly three years of our research has found that the status quo is not sufficient to meet PD professionals' needs in Washington and the field. What we think is essential in the near term, therefore, is to move current PD operations more toward joint strategic planning for global priorities; to give the regional bureaus and posts a greater voice in planning and agenda setting; to strengthen the back office support (R/PPR) that the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs gives to posts; to coordinate PD financial resources to support global, regional, and bilateral strategies; and to create a task force that closely examines how different informational and interpersonal engagement programs and services could potentially be co-located and consolidated for better coordination. We believe that much of this work can be led by Washington PD leadership in the remaining months of the current administration.

### Summary of Recommendations:

1. Create a Global Strategic Priorities Unit and emphasize need for regional planning.
2. Strengthen the PD administrative back office.
3. Coordinate PD financial resources with global, regional and bilateral strategies
4. Consider embedding regional representatives from IIP and ECA inside the regional bureaus.
5. Create a task force to review PD services that can be co-located or consolidated.

(For full recommendations see pages 12-17)

## INTRODUCTION

The world is undergoing rapid advancements in information technology and a hyper-networked global media space, not to mention new national security threats, which public diplomacy (PD) can and must play a significant role in countering. Public Diplomacy activities are essential for effective U.S. foreign policy. The mission of public diplomacy is currently defined in the Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) as one that seeks “to support the achievement of U.S. foreign policy goals and objectives, advance national interests, and enhance national security by informing and influencing foreign publics and by expanding and strengthening the relationship between people and government of the United States and citizens of the rest of the world.”<sup>1</sup>

Can the current PD structure be organized to more effectively meet this mission and better support U.S. foreign policy goals on global, regional and bilateral levels? And how can it better represent PD strategies, successes and shortcomings to Congress and the American people?

The purpose of this project was to contribute to a conversation on potential structural reform for PD at the State Department by reimagining an operation that emphasizes strategic planning and ensures that resources, tools and services can more easily align to those plans; and to enhance how the State Department communicates PD strategies, tactics and use of its resources to Congress. Using four recent U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD) reports—“Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting” (2014, 2015), “Data-Driven Public Diplomacy” (2014) and “Getting the People Part Right II (2015)” —as our foundation,<sup>2</sup> ACPD conducted a six-month study based on consultations with more than 100 State Department, White House and congressional leaders for their views on how the functions and resources within the PD family of bureaus could better align to meet its stated mission.<sup>3</sup>

Through our research, we have identified six key findings:

1. PD professionals across all regional and functional bureaus are working honorably and diligently to implement programs to the benefit of the United States and its people despite facing structural, legal, and cultural challenges. The system they work within could be improved to enhance their efforts.
  2. While PD is conceptualized as a kit of informational, educational and cultural tools and services, in practice, PD is not always coordinated well with larger strategic planning and campaign organizing for global, regional and bilateral foreign policy goals. Given that the informational, cultural and educational programs or services PD bureaus provide should not be ends in themselves, a higher premium on strategic planning, target audience identification and, most importantly, the alignment of the proper resources and tools to influence those audiences, could help streamline PD professionals' efforts to support foreign policy objectives.
  3. Briefings on public diplomacy activities to Congress are not always organized to present the best picture of coordinated PD campaigns that utilize various informational, educational and cultural tools. PD programs are deployed in support of foreign policy issues and strategies and this is the way in which members of Congress and their staff members think about
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them. ACPD has found that members and their staff are frustrated that they are often briefed on PD as a series of disconnected tactics rather than an integrated campaign approach. For example, briefings are often on specific educational or informational programs and not on how they reinforce one another for a specific audience. It would benefit PD significantly if briefings were re-framed by the foreign policy issue, clearly articulating strategy and target audiences, resource allocation, the PD tools and services aligned to meet them, and the outcomes.

4. PD operations at the State Department need the Under Secretary's Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources (R/PPR) to connect, coordinate and resource all of PD to foreign policy objectives. PD is distinct within the department in the sense that its target audiences are foreign citizens and PD practitioners have to manage roughly \$1.2 billion in programs: 84 educational and cultural activities administered from Washington alone, in addition to hundreds of other field-directed programs, digital platforms and spokespeople abroad. R/PPR should continue to help better streamline administrative efforts for public diplomacy and work closely with other relevant parts of the department and PD professionals in the field. It is essential that they identify and forecast PD needs and help convey them to relevant stakeholders in department bureaus representing human resources, information technology, administration, and research and evaluation.
5. There is a statutorily mandated two-budget system for public diplomacy: the Educational and Cultural Exchange (ECE) budget and PD funds in the Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) budget. Yet the two budgets are not mutually exclusive; they depend greatly on one another. While Washington-administered exchange and cultural programs are generally funded through the ECE account, the groundwork and support provided by posts in the field are generally funded with D&CP money. For instance, some locally employed staff (LES) who receive their salaries from PD funds are solely devoted to supporting ECE-funded activities. PD professionals would also appreciate a greater understanding of the restrictions tied to the use of ECE and D&CP funds and why greater flexibility in tapping the two PD funding streams is sometimes not possible. We recognize that the administration's recent budget requests for the ECE account have sought more flexibility within several programs, which Congress must balance relative to its priorities.
6. Regional Bureaus and Public Affairs Sections (PAS) in U.S. embassies abroad want the opportunity to provide more strategic input on the right mix of informational, cultural and educational tools they need in the field to advance their goals. Sometimes, the directives and tools public affairs officers (PAOs) receive from Washington are not aligned with local contexts. In our interviews we found overwhelming support for exchange programs and a strong conviction that they are the lifeblood of PD. However, several State Department and congressional interviewees would like to see Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) programs be more responsive to regional or post needs and have the flexibility to select exchange and cultural programs that cater to local audiences. The same goes for information programs. The emphasis therefore needs to be on strategic prioritization: the right policy goal, the right audience, the right funding, and the right program or tool to influence attitudes and behaviors. The press and public diplomacy offices in the regional bureaus, especially, find the added regional or coordination units in ECA and the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) to sometimes be unnecessary gatekeepers to, rather than

facilitators of, the services they need to be responsive to the field and run integrated PD campaigns.

As a result of these findings, ACPD sees an opportunity to move toward five fundamental changes to create a more strategically oriented and efficient PD enterprise that advances global, regional and bilateral policies and supports PD professionals in Washington and on the frontlines.

## METHODOLOGY

This study took six months. ACPD consulted more than 100 State Department, White House, Defense Department and congressional stakeholders on their views and attitudes toward the current system, and how it could be redesigned. We also referenced literature on mergers, organizational design, and operations management in the private sector.<sup>4</sup> In addition, we used four recent ACPD reports that involved dozens of in-depth qualitative interviews with PD leaders and officials worldwide—"Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting" (2014, 2015), "Data-Driven Public Diplomacy" (2014) and "Getting the People Part Right II" (2015)—as a foundation of knowledge.<sup>5</sup> Compiling the "Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting" each year, especially, has given ACPD a meta view of how PD is organized and how the services could better work together to fulfill this mission.

In our past research, ACPD has identified three areas within the PD family of bureaus that could be improved: 1) strengthening administrative back office (R/PPR) support to focus on research, technology platforms and databases, personnel and training; 2) improving strategic planning to coordinate the use of all the tools and services of public diplomacy—informational, cultural and educational—for global, regional and bilateral goals; and 3) coordinating PD funds in the D&CP budget that are used to implement a wide range of activities funded in the ECE budget. We have consistently stated that there needs to be a strategic and integrated approach to the use of all PD tools in campaigns to influence foreign audiences in support of policy objectives.

For the purpose of this white paper, we held a design-thinking exercise in partnership with the State Department's Strategy Lab in November 2015. The half-day event included roughly 30 current and former public diplomacy leaders (foreign service, civil service and political appointees) from the department and the National Security Council, who were asked how they would restructure the PD Washington apparatus so that it could more optimally meet the objectives of advancing various U.S. foreign policy goals through information, cultural and educational activities.

Using the findings from that exercise as a baseline to understand current attitudes toward the PD enterprise, we then developed a list of 11 questions to interview roughly 80 State, White House and congressional officials about their thoughts on the system.<sup>6</sup> As recommendations developed, we met again with these officials to gauge their reactions and concerns. The final paper is a result of an extensive consultative process with these professionals.

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## HISTORY OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ORGANIZATION AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT

The roots of the current PD structure date to 1953 when the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) was formed to more effectively advocate for U.S. foreign policy abroad. In 1999, the State Department and the USIA were merged, largely due to political pressure to cut spending in the foreign affairs budget. The end of the Cold War and a time of budget austerity led to the end of the independent agency focused primarily on outreach to foreign publics. By moving the PD functions into the State Department, there was a hope that public diplomacy would be made more relevant by better connecting it to policy decision-making and implementation.

USIA's regional offices were absorbed by State's regional bureaus. Its two programmatic bureaus, educational and cultural affairs programs, and policy programs became standalone functional bureaus: the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP). USIA's Office of the Director was turned into the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (also known in State Department parlance as "R"). While the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs controlled the funding for overseas public diplomacy operations, the public affairs officers (PAOs) worldwide did not report to him or her, despite the fact that PAOs are responsible for carrying out PD operations in the field. PAOs reported to their respective Chiefs of Missions (COMs), who in turn answered to their regional bureau Assistant Secretary and eventually the Under Secretary for Political Affairs.<sup>7</sup>

Public diplomacy's support core also did not survive the merger intact. Instead, its various management and support personnel—who oversaw staffing, resources, training, security and programs—were absorbed into their much larger State Department counterparts' offices. In 2005, the Office of Policy, Planning and Resources (R/PPR) was set up to support the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs in working with various administrative dimensions of the department. This was a vitally important development for the preservation of PD funding and responsibilities. In 2010, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Diplomacy position was established in the regional bureaus to help bring PD closer to policy making.



## CURRENT PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ORGANIZATION AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT

Public diplomacy assets at the department are divided among the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) at more than 180 U.S. missions worldwide; the Washington family of three public diplomacy bureaus under the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs; PD offices within regional and functional bureaus also in Washington; and a few regional hubs around the world.

In the field, Public Affairs Sections can vary dramatically in size depending on the size of the mission, ranging from those run by local staff or one American PD officer to sections with dozens of staff drawn from the categories below. An average section is run by a public affairs officer (PAO) and divided between information activities under an information officer (IO) and cultural activities under a cultural affairs officer (CAO). This core of officers works with locally employed staff (LES), contract staff, American eligible family members (EFMs), and third country nationals (TCNs).

In Washington, the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs is the senior-most official solely responsible for PD activities. The Under Secretary is supported by the Office for Policy, Planning, and Resources (R/PPR). PD informational, cultural, and educational human resources and tools are concentrated in three bureaus: the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP), and the Bureau of Public Affairs (PA). There is also the Global Engagement Center, formerly the Center on Strategic Counterterrorism Communications, which was created by executive order originally in 2010.

The seven regional bureaus have public diplomacy and public affairs components, although the structure and size vary greatly. Lastly, non-PD functional bureaus and special envoys also sometimes have PD support, although they are generally focused on press engagement. The majority of Washington-based professionals are in the civil service and work alongside foreign service officers, contractors and political-appointees.

Regional platforms (other than the Public Affairs Sections at U.S. embassies) have largely been limited to regional media hubs run through the Bureau of Public Affairs (PA). These hubs tend to focus on regional press engagement and amplify the voices of senior officials in Washington and visiting the region.

## CONGRESS AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

For members of Congress and their staffs, the objectives, outputs and outcomes of public diplomacy can be difficult to assess in the current way the work is represented to them. PD briefings are often done on separate ECA, IIP, PA and GEC activities. ACPD has found that members and staffers alike can become frustrated with learning about PD as a series of independent tactics rather than coordinated PD campaigns that clearly align tools, services and resources to focus on various foreign policy challenges. This is because they receive briefings on educational and cultural programs, or American Spaces or digital platforms, instead of clear overviews of how the pieces fit together and support each other to advance foreign policy priorities, such as countering negative Russian influence. They also want to know how the PD operations – and their two primary budgets – are working together.

Congress tends to examine foreign policy issues by themes, not by programs and individual activities. Currently, the PD apparatus is not prepared to respond to congressional requests to understand how PD tools are aligning to support specific policies. ACPD absolutely believes that PD officials -- from the Under Secretary to PAOs -- should be actively explaining their work to members of Congress and their staffs and generally have a more robust presence on the Hill. They should also be represented in policy discussions with their colleagues representing political and/or economic issues so they can explain the PD dimension of strategy. Overall, when briefing Congress, PD professionals need to keep in mind their target audience for that briefing is more interested in how all PD tools work in tandem to advance national security goals and adjust their briefings accordingly.

## IMAGINING A NEW PD ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: ALIGNING PD RESOURCES, FUNCTIONS, AND TOOLS WITH MISSION

The goal of this project was to think creatively about how to further align the various PD resources, functions, tools and services to better meet the PD mission of advancing U.S. foreign policy goals on global, regional and bilateral levels. In creating a “blue-sky,” ideal vision, we hoped to identify areas PD leadership could build from in the near term.

The organization that resulted from the design thinking exercise and subsequent interviews is fundamentally different from the current one. It would emphasize strategic planning at the global, regional and post levels and encourage a greater appreciation of all PD tools – informational, cultural and educational – to inform and influence target audiences. Much of the feedback was to combine PD functions so that regional PD leadership and PAOs would not be required to coordinate with multiple offices to acquire the programs and services they need to engage local publics. In order to have a transparent toolkit that strategic planners and implementers could draw from, all of PD informational and interpersonal engagement tools (i.e. professional and academic exchanges; cultural programs; youth programs; information campaigns; digital platforms; broadcast and video services; speakers programs; and American Spaces) would be brought together in a Bureau of Public Diplomacy Programs. There would also be a core administrative back office to support the efficient application of these activities. Specifically:

**Global Strategic Priorities Unit and Emphasis on Regional and Bilateral Level Strategic Planning:** There was widespread agreement that strategic planning needs to be a core function developed throughout the PD Washington apparatus and at PASs worldwide. A central yet nimble Global Strategic Priorities Unit for PD could flex and surge to focus on coordinating global PD strategies and tools to help meet transnational short- and long-term foreign policy objectives. Examples of these global issues would be the environment, health crises, countering Russian disinformation and negative influence, and countering violent extremism. Concurrently, regional bureaus, functional bureaus, and posts would all need to continue to define and develop their integrated short-, medium-, and long-term planning capabilities. In planning at the global level, regional bureaus must be included so they can identify the posts that are most relevant to the strategies, as not every Washington directive resonates with local audiences. When a foreign policy issue is contained to one region, the regional bureau would take the lead on building strategies and coordinating implementation tools. When it is contained to one country, the PAO would have the lead and articulate how PD fits with the bilateral mission in the integrated country strategy (ICS) process.

**PD Administrative Back Office:** In the current structure, this is the Office of Policy, Planning and Resources (R/PPR) that reports to the Under Secretary, and the PD Executive Secretariats (IIP-ECA/EX and PA/EX) function that is located in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Bureau of Public Affairs. The work of the office should focus on the long-term development of PD resources, forecast potential needs, support PAOs without adding to their administrative tasks, and coordinate with its counterparts in the rest of the Department. This office would have seven primary areas of responsibility to coordinate policy; financial resources; technology platforms; research and evaluation; personnel and training; internal communications; and administrative operations.

**Bureau of Public Diplomacy Programming:** Functions across the PD enterprise are often not looked at horizontally. While a PD toolkit nominally exists, not all of the programs and services are transparent

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or available to meet specific priorities. A bureau that focuses on improving PD tools would include all informational, cultural and educational tools and emphasize that they are shared services to implement global, regional and bilateral strategies. It would not have separate policy offices or regional desks but would instead focus on the strength of programs and services. This bureau would aim to streamline functions, especially as they pertain to the production of information (i.e. social media and website platforms, broadcast services, photography, translation, editorial content), and give PD leadership a clear view of what they can use to meet global, regional and bilateral priorities depending on the target audiences. PD leaders and strategic planners at global and regional levels would draw from this bureau, and the staff within the bureau would invest in optimizing their individual tools for the needs of the service. In the current structure, this would mean combining ECA, IIP and some offices in PA.

**Spokesperson's Office Cell:** The Spokesperson's office, with the primary function of being responsive to domestic and foreign press, would be separate from this PD Programming Bureau, but be able to draw on it for its various production needs. [Note: The Spokesperson's Office Cell is contrary to the Bureau of Public Affairs' recent reorganization, which combined the Spokesperson's Office with the rest of PA operations with the purpose of leading to greater synergies.]

## NEAR-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

While ACPD thinks reimagining the structure was an informative exercise to review how PD tools could better serve strategies and campaigns to target key audiences worldwide, we understand that it would take a major re-organization and a sustained effort over years to implement it properly. While it could create a more integrated approach toward PD and work better within the department, we also realize that the organizational structure is unlike the department's conventional bureau apparatus.

What we think is essential in the near term, therefore, is to move current PD operations more toward joint strategic planning for global priorities; to give the regional bureaus and posts a greater voice in planning and agenda setting; to strengthen the back office support (R/PPR) that the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs gives to posts; to coordinate PD financial resources to support global, regional, and bilateral strategies; and to create a task force that closely examines how different informational and interpersonal engagement programs and services could potentially be co-located and consolidated for better coordination. We believe that much of this work can be led by Washington PD leadership in the remaining months of the current administration.

Below are our five main recommendations:

### 1. CREATE A GLOBAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES UNIT AND EMPHASIZE NEED FOR REGIONAL PLANNING

There is a tremendous need for a global strategic planning capacity in the public diplomacy family of bureaus, working with the public diplomacy and press offices in the regional bureaus and at posts, and making sure that it syncs with the department's efforts toward greater strategic planning for multi-year goals and objectives. Currently, short-term priorities take up the vast majority of PD capacity, leaving very little time to get ahead of issues or to develop multi-month or multi-year strategic plans emphasizing long-term goals and objectives. We recommend the creation of a structured but dynamic capability for developing and implementing public diplomacy strategies that are rigorous, comprehensive and inclusive.

A Global Strategic Priorities Unit for the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs should work to develop and implement strategic plans for worldwide issues that affect **more than one regional or functional bureau**. These plans must be grounded in audience segmentation research and feedback from process and impact evaluations, as well as departments and regional bureau strategic goals. Too often Washington leadership calls on all posts to participate in a campaign that by nature would not resonate with all local audiences. By focusing efforts, the department could concentrate limited resources to provide meaningful change where it is needed. The Global Strategic Priorities Unit should be nimble; able to flex and surge depending on long and short-term foreign policy priorities; and focused on coordinating efforts toward global issues that involve more than one regional bureau.

We also encourage that public diplomacy and press offices in the regional bureaus and non-PD functional bureaus—such as the Ocean and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES); Counter Terrorism (CT); Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL)—also increase their capacity for strategic planning for the effective implementation of activities using scarce resources. When an issue is specific

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to a region, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Diplomacy for that regional bureau must take the lead and represent their interests at policy-making discussions in the State Department and at the National Security Council, in addition to congressional briefings and communication with outside stakeholders. When an issue is global, the designated strategic planners in regional and functional bureaus would serve as representatives to the Global Strategic Priorities Unit, with a particular emphasis on discerning the posts that are the most relevant for Washington-directed public diplomacy programs and campaigns. Accordingly, as new priorities are established, new funding must also be found or trade-offs identified. Regional and functional bureaus would retain reactionary press operations while giving bureaus, each with their own foreign policy objectives, a new and separate capacity to develop and coordinate their own campaigns.

The point is to move toward more of a collaborative approach to discuss strategies to support post in their efforts to connect with foreign audiences to advance multi-layered foreign policy goals.

### Proposed Public Diplomacy Strategic Planning Table

SCOPE	LEAD	FUNCTIONS
<b>Global</b>	Global Strategic Priorities Coordinator	Coordinate strategy and implementation on transnational issues, such as countering negative Russian influence, health pandemics, and other Secretary-led priorities. This unit would work with the strategic planners in the PD bureaus, regional bureaus, functional bureaus, and posts to triage priorities. An essential role of this unit is not to create more taskings but to narrow the targeting of programs and to deconflict priorities when resources become overtaxed.
<b>Regional</b>	Deputy Assistant Secretary for PD in Regional Bureaus <sup>8</sup>	Coordinate strategy and implementation on regional issues such as South China Sea (East Asia Pacific region) and Power Africa (Africa region). This group would work with the strategic planners in the global unit to help determine which posts in their region are relevant and have the capacity to help while also working with posts to triage regional and post priorities and communicate them. As point people for regional PD strategies, they should play a role in promoting PD concepts within the regional bureau's chain of command and not just across PD elements.
<b>Bilateral</b>	Public Affairs Officer	Coordinate strategy and implementation on bilateral issues for the Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) and Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan (PDIP). The PAO should work with the strategic planners in the regional bureau to communicate local priorities and constraints for both regional and global strategic priorities, and be an active voice in country team meetings.

## 2. STRENGTHEN THE PD ADMINISTRATIVE BACK OFFICE

An administrative back office, currently R/PPR, needs to acutely focus on defining policy; strengthening and allocating financial resources; streamlining administrative processes; developing technology platforms and databases; improving the quality of personnel and training; clearly articulating internal communications to PD professionals worldwide; and consistently producing audience segmentation research and process and impact evaluations. The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs also needs this office to forecast PD needs, streamline the administrative burdens placed on PAOs in the field, and coordinate with his or her counterparts in the rest of the department. Given the current fiscal environment, significant increases in staffing will be challenging. Personnel therefore may be re-organized to focus on streamlining and other process improvement initiatives while keeping the changes budget neutral.

### PD Back Office Administrative Core Functions

Role	Purpose	Current Status
<b>Policy</b>	This position provides strategic guidance on the use, conduct, and future of public diplomacy and serves as the principal officer to update PD rules, regulations, and guides including the Foreign Affairs Manual. The position would also ensure that PD interests are represented in the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) and other long-term department planning initiatives.	In R/PPR
<b>Finance</b>	This position is a senior officer in charge of resources who works to help the Under Secretary better understand how the PD budgets are spent through its various channels. Moving forward, the director should also take primary responsibility for gathering data and compiling a joint spending plan for PD activities.	In R/PPR
<b>Operations</b>	The executive support function for ECA, IIP, PA, and GEC. This function separates out the short-term budget, personnel, purchasing, and travel functions from longer-term planning. It is essential that it reduce administrative overhead and leverage shared resources.	Currently there are separate units under ECA and PA
<b>Personnel &amp; Training</b>	At a macro level, the human resources staff of the department manage personnel to support the overall needs of the service. To meet the various needs of public diplomacy today, identify training gaps at various levels, fund alternate delivery mechanisms, monitor how PD positions are being filled and identify the skill sets they will need in the future, the Under Secretary needs to be able to collaborate with human resources (RMA and CDA). This position will focus on those needs.	In development (as part of R/PPR and through R-funded FSI training); Also bureau-focused within IIP, PA, and ECA

<b>Technology</b>	Public diplomacy professionals, working domestically and overseas, have a compelling need to use modern IT devices, software, services and infrastructure to effectively achieve foreign policy goals, measure effectiveness, and more efficiently use resources. However, current efforts are disparate and spread across a variety of different offices in R/PPR, IIP, ECA and the Bureau of Information Resource Management (IRM). By making investments in consolidating current software tools, improved customer relationship management (CRM) software, and social media analytics, a director of technology can deliver more value to the field, mine valuable insights from existing data, and improve the targeting of PD programs. In order to be effective, there needs to be a vision for PD technology needs along with a plan for investment in emerging technologies to benefit the organization and its operations.	Currently there are separate units under IIP and ECA, but not PA
<b>Research &amp; Evaluation</b>	This position will provide more strategic leadership for audience research and understanding program impact. This position and development of the existing unit into a full research and evaluation team will take time, but it is a positive step forward to give more organizational legitimacy and authority to research, advocate for researchers' needs, and prioritize research activities in ways that reflect strategic short-, middle-, and long-term objectives.	In development at R/PPR; also separate units in ECA and IIP
<b>Internal Communications</b>	Policies, best practices, changes, and other information needs to be effectively communicated to and absorbed by the PD workforce worldwide and the department as a whole. The internal communications officer should oversee regular communication to officers working on PD issues to keep them updated on changes in programs and practices as well as to help them keep up to date on the latest developments on policy issues, technology, training opportunities, and more. This role will also be critical in maintaining a two-way conversation with PD staff around the world to gather their successes, challenges, and insights to shape decisions and help other staff.	Does not exist formally in R/PPR

### 3. COORDINATE PD FINANCIAL RESOURCES WITH GLOBAL, REGIONAL AND BILATERAL STRATEGIES

The PD budget is fundamental to ensuring that resources can better align with global, regional and bilateral strategies. PD activities, however, are funded primarily through two appropriations, supported by somewhat distinct statutory authorities: the Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs appropriation (ECE), supported largely by the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (Fulbright-Hays), and PD funds (known in State Department parlance as “.7” funds) in the Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) budget, supported largely by the U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (Smith-Mundt).

In fiscal year 2017, the requested State Department PD budget combined is \$1.208 billion: \$639.773 million (ECE)<sup>9</sup> + \$550.444 million (PD line in D&CP and American salaries for PD coned officers) + \$18.100 million in additional D&CP PD funds included in the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) request. The ECE budget funds the 84 official educational and cultural programs administered from Washington through ECA. While appropriated separately, the D&CP appropriation funds international informational and countering violent extremism activities in Washington in addition to public diplomacy activities and locally employed staff (LES) and third country national (TCN) staff salaries in Public Affairs Sections worldwide. Educational and cultural programs are foundational for PD efforts globally and Public Affairs Sections worldwide use their limited D&CP funding to fund local personnel to ensure that ECE-funded programs are properly implemented.

We believe that these different appropriations must be better coordinated so that PD leadership has a transparent look across these funds to manage resources between Washington and Public Affairs Sections, and to align those resources with strategic priorities at the global, regional and bilateral levels. We recommend that congressional appropriations committees articulate the components of the PD budget through a table of public diplomacy accounts and signal the need for a joint spending plan to coordinate the effective allocation of these resources within the State Department.<sup>10</sup> We also strongly advise that Congress includes as much flexibility as possible in the ECE and D&CP PD budgets so that educational, cultural and information activities can be more responsive to short-, near- and long-term foreign policy goals. Given both congressional and presidential priorities for ECA programs and longstanding restrictions on the use of ECE and D&CP funds, we recognize this will require an ongoing dialogue.

Given the copious administrative tasks that Public Affairs Sections at embassies need to complete, and that the effectiveness of PD is ultimately determined in the field, any spending plan should include regional bureaus' input on how programs and activities fit into the PAS's local context and priorities. We also strongly encourage the movement toward greater resourcing of audience segmentation research, digital analytics, and process and impact evaluations of public diplomacy activities to better aid in strategic planning. As stated in past ACPD reports, we advise that funding for research and evaluation should make up roughly 3 percent of the total PD budget by 2021.<sup>11</sup> The evaluation findings should be available to external stakeholders in order to transparently assess impact.

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#### **4. CONSIDER EMBEDDING REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES IN THE IIP AND ECA BUREAUS TO THE REGIONAL BUREAUS**

We also encourage the consideration of embedding PD professionals who focus on regional issues for ECA and IIP within the regional bureaus so that they can work more closely with the relevant Deputy Assistant Secretaries for Public Diplomacy. Originally stood up to be a coordinating function for the regional bureaus, these roles can often inadvertently serve as gatekeepers to regional bureaus' requests for programs and services, blocking the implementation of services they believe are most pertinent to advancing regional and bilateral strategies on-the-ground and to supporting posts' needs. We hope that management in ECA and IIP directs these roles to be more responsive and considerate of various field officers' needs, offering them a menu of informational, educational and cultural activities they can select from to inform and influence their target audiences.

#### **5. CREATE A TASK FORCE TO REVIEW PD SERVICES THAT CAN BE CO-LOCATED OR CONSOLIDATED**

Public diplomacy integration requires acute attention to detail, patience, flexibility, and a keen awareness of the tension and anxiety such structural change can provoke. Congressional support for modernizing the organizational design of PD at the department will be important, and there are many internal hurdles to clear and details to address. A task force led by career foreign service officers and civil servants who have extensive knowledge of the affected PD functions and management bureaus, would be critical to produce an iterative process that considers how different programs and services could potentially be co-located so that PD leaders could more easily identify and draw from tools necessary for their strategic plans.

For instance, IIP and PA have fundamentally different missions: PA focuses on the news communicating news to global audiences, while IIP focuses on advocacy campaigns and communicating directly with foreign citizens. However, they use many of the same tools to meet those missions, such as websites, digital media accounts, translation services, and video equipment. Many of the key functions that target international media within public affairs are funded with public diplomacy D&CP money, the same funds that support IIP information production activities. Therefore, there is no reason they cannot co-operate. Our research has determined that there should be no legal rationale that these two entities must remain separate.

To better streamline efforts across the PD bureaus, we recommend the task force explore the areas where these types of resources can be better utilized to accomplish short- and long-term needs. The task force should look at potential areas of duplication and opportunities for co-location that may lead to better outcomes for communicating strategic objectives. However, it is imperative that a task force make decisions focused not only on money and what is legally permissible, but also on how the strategic communications objectives, such as audience, context and mission, are being met by the various functions within the State Department.



## CONCLUSION

Public diplomacy is essential to many of our current foreign policy goals and it is critical that PD professionals be part of the decision-making and strategic planning process, in addition to briefings to Congress on various issues. It is our intent that this paper help start a conversation on potential structural reforms within the public diplomacy apparatus to move more toward this structure, as nearly three years of research has found that the status quo is not sufficient to meet PD professionals' needs in Washington and the field. Such change would take concerted leadership and commitment. The PD structure functions well when its leadership has the resources, authority and support of the Secretary of State and the President. We therefore encourage the incoming administration and Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs to acutely focus on management issues. We also urge the incoming Under Secretary to plan to serve through an entire presidential term.

However, there are some steps that can be taken in the near-term: stand-up a small, nimble Global Strategic Priorities Unit to coordinate strategies and implementation on global issues; strengthen the functional administrative back office for the PD family of bureaus; and create a task force of career officials to review how PD tools can better serve global, regional and bilateral strategies. We hope Congress will signal the need for PD's separate budgets to work together to help the Under Secretary better align PD resources with strategic priorities through a spending plan.

Lastly, we hope that PD professionals will continue to strengthen their engagement with Congress and frame their briefings on foreign policy issues by clearly articulating the issue, the PD strategy to support it, the target audiences, the resources and relevant PD tools and services allocated, and the performance indicators. PD professionals in the regional bureaus in Washington especially should join their colleagues representing political and economic portfolios to explain how PD is advancing these foreign policy goals.

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## ENDNOTES

1. Foreign Affairs Manual, FAM.State.gov/ Also see: “10 FAM 100: Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs” <https://fam.state.gov/searchapps/viewer?format=html&query=public%20diplomacy&links=PUBLIC,DIPLOMACI&url=/FAM/10FAM/10FAM0110.html#M114>
2. See: “2014 Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting,” December 2014, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; “2015 Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting,” September 2015, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; “Data-Driven Public Diplomacy,” September 2014, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; “Getting the People Part Right II,” June 2015, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.
3. In preparation for its above reports, ACPD has interviewed more than 150 PD leaders, mid-career and entry level officials for its key findings. This project is based on in-depth qualitative interviews with more than 100 PD professionals at the State Department, in addition to stakeholders in Congress and at the National Security Council.
4. “Global Human Capital Trends 2016”, 2016, Deloitte University Press; “Good Governance Standard for Public Services”, January 2005, The Independent Commission for Good Governance in Public Services (UK); “Government for the People - The Road to Customer-Centered Services” February 2016, Partnership for Public Service/Accenture Federal Services; Rogers and Saenz, “Make Your Back Office an Accelerator” March 2007, Harvard Business Review; Collins, “Good to Great”, 2001, HarperCollins; Govindarajan and Trimble, “How Stella Saved the Farm: A Tale About Making Innovation Happen”, 2013, Macmillan; Herzberg, “One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?”, 2002, Harvard Business Review.
5. “2014 Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting,” December 2014, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; “2015 Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting,” September 2015, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; “Data-Driven Public Diplomacy,” September 2014, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; “Getting the People Part Right II,” June 2015, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.
6. The questions include: What is the core mission of public diplomacy?; What are the core uses of public diplomacy? (What are the essential services to public diplomacy that make it public diplomacy? How do these different activities reinforce one another?); What do PD participants want from the activities?; Within the R family of bureaus, are public diplomacy assets currently aligned to carry out these activities?; Are there any redundancies between bureaus that work in our favor?; What can only be done in PD that cannot in other parts of State?; Which functions should be in Washington, and which ones could be based in centers in the key regions?; What are the benefits and drawbacks of more centralized strategic planning and resource allocation?; Does the current apparatus work or is it too silo-ed? (Not all questions were asked of all interview participants.)
7. In ACPD’s June 2015 “Getting the People Part Right II” report specifically, we found via a sample of more than 50 PD professionals at the State Department that there was “an underlying sense of frustration that, while PD is closer to policymaking than ever before, there is no collective understanding within the Department on the mission and conduct of long-term PD and how it contributes to statecraft. There is, however, more clarity on the public affairs function, since senior leadership is inevitably focused on short-term messaging and crises.” We recommended that a “comprehensive and inclusive strategy-development process for PD can mitigate the problems of blurred lines of authority for PD within the Department and the multiplicity of objectives that weaken PD effectiveness. Holistic resource support for PD officers ... is also vital to strengthening.” Through our research for the “Getting the People Part Right” report, dozens of PD officers referenced the merger and its remaining legacies in conversations. The 2008 and 2015 reports cited that integration between public diplomacy and policymaking—the goal of the merger—remained elusive, especially since PD officers were significantly underrepresented in the senior-most ranks of department management.
8. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Diplomacy position in the regional bureaus has existed since 2010.
9. This figure also reflects \$10.8M in an earmark for the East-West Center that in prior years was funded through a separate appropriation.

10. The Fiscal Year 2017 Congressional Budget Justification articulated this already through an account table.
11. See: “2014 Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting,” December 2014, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; “2015 Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting,” September 2015, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; “Data-Driven Public Diplomacy,” September 2014, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**ACPD** – U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy

**CSCC** - Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications, Department of State

**D&CP** - Diplomatic and Consular Programs Budget, Department of State

**ECA** - Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau, Department of State

**ECE** - Educational and Cultural Affairs Budget

**GEC** – Global Engagement Center

**IA** - International Affairs Budget

**IIP** - International Information Programs Bureau

**PA** - Public Affairs Bureau, Department of State

**PAO** - Public Affairs Officer

**PAS** - Public Affairs Section

**PD** - Public Diplomacy

**PD DAS** - Public Diplomacy Deputy Assistant Secretary (in regional bureaus)

**PDOD** - Directors of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (in regional and functional bureaus)

**R** - Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Cone at the State Department, also in reference to the Under Secretary

**R/PPR** - Office of Policy Planning and Resources for the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

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